

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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Minority (202) 225-2927

May 15, 2026

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

We write to express deep concern over the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) preventing publication of information that further underscored the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.<sup>1</sup> We are alarmed by the disturbing trend within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to suppress important scientific information on vaccines and demand you publicly release the data so patients and health care providers can use this information in their decision making.

Reports indicate that in October 2025, FDA career scientists were forced to withdraw studies from medical journals, despite either already being accepted by a peer-reviewed medical journal or being accepted for presentation at the prominent pharmacoepidemiology conference. One of the studies, which was accepted for publication by the journal *Drug Safety*, included a review of records of 7.5 million Medicare patients to determine if there were health risks in the three- or six-week period post-vaccination. A draft version of the study noted that “COVID-19 vaccines are well-established as safe” and that there “were no new safety signals.”<sup>2</sup> The other study, which was presented in abstract form at a conference in August 2025 and was submitted to the journal *Vaccine*, reviewed records of 4.2 million patients between 6 months to 64 years of age who received the COVID-19 vaccine to examine certain health outcomes from receiving the

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<sup>1</sup> *F.D.A. Blocked Publication of Research Finding Covid and Shingles Vaccines Were Safe*, The New York Times (May 5, 2026).

<sup>2</sup> MedRxiv, *Safety Monitoring of Multiple Health Outcomes Following 2023–2024 COVID-19 Vaccination among Medicare Beneficiaries Aged 65 Years and Older in the United States* (Jan. 5, 2025). (<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2025.01.03.25319975v1.full>).

vaccine.<sup>3</sup> The abstract noted that “COVID-19 vaccines are well-established as safe” and that researchers found “no new safety concerns.”

In addition to preventing publication of the COVID-19 studies, in February 2026, FDA leadership reportedly prevented submission of study results for the Shingles vaccine to a drug safety conference. This study further supported the efficacy of the Shingles vaccine.

Not only are you preventing release of information that can help inform Americans in their decisions to get themselves and their families vaccinated, but you are also preventing health care providers from utilizing data that helps them advise their patients. These studies, particularly those conducted by health agencies, examine outcomes in millions of patients, rather than the thousands that had been studied in clinical trials. This makes them an important source of information for health care providers and professional organizations in making recommendations for their patients.<sup>4</sup>

The Trump Administration has drastically weakened the childhood vaccine schedule by switching certain vaccines from “routine” to “shared clinical decision-making,” including for vaccines against COVID-19, which many physicians, scientists, and other experts have warned will lead to more sick children and hospitalization of our kids.<sup>5</sup> Yet, when new evidence is developed that can support the decision making process between health care providers and patients, the agency has proactively prevented its release. This Administration has made clear it will do whatever it takes to bury information supporting the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

There is an alarming trend that continues to surface in HHS surrounding the spreading of vaccine misinformation and the suppressing of data that contradicts the misinformation. For example, this all comes on the heels of additional reporting that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also prevented publication of scientific evidence that COVID-19 vaccines were effective in reducing hospitalization.<sup>6</sup> Further, reports show that the withdrawal of the studies came in October 2025, just five months after your May 2025 announcement that all manufacturers of COVID-19 vaccines would need to conduct annual randomized clinical placebo-controlled trials to earn approval.<sup>7</sup> Experts noted that the “new Covid-19 philosophy” outlined in your article does not add to the knowledge base and puts clinical trial volunteers at

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<sup>3</sup> ISPE, *Safety Monitoring of Multiple Health Outcomes following 2023–2024 COVID-19 Vaccination among Commercial Health Plan Enrollees Aged 6 Months–64 Years in the United States* (Aug. 24, 2025) (<https://2025ispe.eventscribe.net/fsPopup.asp?PresenterID=1839098&mode=posterPresenterInfo>).

<sup>4</sup> See note 1.

<sup>5</sup> AAMC, *What you need to know about the updated childhood vaccination schedule* (March 3, 2026) (<https://www.aamc.org/news/what-you-need-know-about-updated-childhood-vaccination-schedule>).

<sup>6</sup> *CDC Won't Publish Report Showing Covid Shots Cut Likelihood of Hospital Visits*, Washington Post (Apr. 22, 2026).

<sup>7</sup> *FDA halts publication of studies on covid, shingles vaccines*, Washington Post (May 5, 2026).

risk.<sup>8</sup> It appears that this announcement and the subsequent forced withdrawals of safety information plays into the vaccine hesitancy that is being pushed by the Trump Administration.

It appears that FDA is only opposed to disseminating information when it validates the safety of these vaccines. When confirming that these publications were blocked by FDA, HHS claimed that the withdrawals occurred “because the authors drew broad conclusions that were not supported by the underlying data” and to “protect the integrity” of FDA’s scientific process.<sup>9</sup> However, FDA previously had no concern spreading claims, without supporting evidence, that the COVID-19 vaccine had caused at least 10 pediatric deaths.<sup>10</sup>

Experts warn that FDA’s forced withdrawal of these papers is a “pretty active act of sabotage” by your leadership.<sup>11</sup> After reviewing information on the studies that is accessible, experts noted that the studies were “well done” and “provide useful information” that should be published to provide the public with confidence that these vaccines are safe.<sup>12</sup>

The suppression of this research yet again demonstrates the lengths to which HHS will go to fan the flames of your vaccine skepticism. It is also dangerous to hide evidence from the American people that vaccines are safe. You say your agency is guided by “radical transparency,” but your actions once again show that transparency takes a back seat to the Trump Administration’s anti-vaccine agenda. We expect true transparency, which is not what this act of censorship reflects.

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<sup>8</sup> Vinay Prasad, M.D., M.P.H., and Martin A. Makary, M.D., M.P.H., *An Evidence-Based Approach to Covid-19 Vaccination*, New England Journal of Medicine (May 20, 2025); *FDA unveils new COVID-19 framework, restricting shots to elderly and high-risk people*, Regulatory Affairs Professionals Society (May 20, 2025); *I’m a Republican former congressman and doctor. A placebo-controlled vaccine trial mandate is dangerous*, STAT News (May 22, 2025).

<sup>9</sup> See note 1.

<sup>10</sup> Endpoints News, *FDA says it won't release details of claimed Covid vaccine deaths in 'near term'* (<https://endpoints.news/fda-says-it-wont-release-details-of-claimed-covid-vaccine-deaths-in-near-term/>) (Dec. 3, 2025).

<sup>11</sup> See note 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

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We demand that you stop playing dangerous games with science and stop putting politics before the health of the American people. The FDA's core mission is to protect the public health, and that should be top of mind for you rather than engaging in political missions to hide important health information from the public.

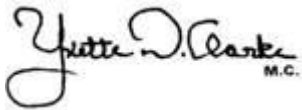
Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Ranking Member



Diana DeGette  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Health



Yvette Clarke  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Oversight and Investigations